



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

savers and as a help to efficiency. The use of the book as a tool is becoming constantly greater, and the public library, as a matter of course, is to supply all books which may be so used. It is the plain duty of the public library to make known its ability to help its community in these practical ways.

It would seem that wise book buying would result more often through a study of the city rather than from the searching of book catalogs. The public library perhaps more than any other educational institution may receive help from social surveys, social engineering, and the records of commercial organizations.

If a social survey has not been made of our city, we should at least ascertain the elements which go to make up its population. Let us know the types of people to be reached and their numbers. How many Americans of native stock? How many residents of foreign birth? How many children of foreign born parents? What are the races represented—English speaking, Germanic, Slavic, Latin, etc.? What are the social and economic conditions? What are their occupations? What of their education and æsthetic development? These are pertinent questions for the library.

Then let a search be made for the most attractive books for each group, always remembering that there is a place for sound, clear, elementary books on all subjects, and that these should be duplicated freely. Let the business of the community be analyzed. Are there textile, steel or wood industries? What manufacturing is done, and what raw materials are used? What of its markets? What of its transportation? What authoritative material may we find on all these subjects, and how may we make it of valuable use? What is being done in our city for the fine arts; for natural science; for the study of literature; for religious and ethical teaching? How may we coöperate in all this work by supplying the necessary books? Let there be a thorough understanding of how and where good books may be used, and then

let us consider the breadth and limitation of our book buying.

The FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT: One is tempted to linger over the flavor which has been given to the wording of the next topic, "The open door, through the book and the library; opportunity for comparison and choice; unhampered freedom of choice," and if we do not linger longer on this it is because we know that that flavor will be made permanent after listening to the address itself of the speaker, Mr. CHARLES E. McLENEGAN, librarian of the Milwaukee public library.

THE OPEN DOOR, THROUGH THE BOOK AND THE LIBRARY; OP- PORTUNITY FOR COMPARISON AND CHOICE; UNHAMPERED FREEDOM OF CHOICE

A professor in one of our large universities recently complained that college students of the present day are so woefully ignorant of many things that they could reasonably be expected to know. The exciting cause of the professor's outburst was an attempt to get from his class some information about Chanticleer. He was met by conservative and judicious silence until one youth, who was not quite sure, ventured the opinion that it was a popular song sung by Jane Addams. Of course such an answer would irritate a Chicago man, and justly too, when we consider that Miss Addams is what made Chicago famous.

But the wail of the professor provokes the question: Where do all the scholars and thinkers of the world come from? What keeps up the breed? What is it that fills in the ramshackle, ill-jointed, unpromising frame of much of our school product, and returns us so much of fine manhood and womanhood, and so much of the sound learning and ability of the working world? We must, I think, admit that the world is fairly furnished with men and women, intelligent and useful, whom no college can claim. And every college has its quota of dunces who may never be anything else. My professor

made no discovery of an alarming decadence, for what he complains of has always been true. We should not be pessimistic about youth, and we must be fair to our schools. They make better what we send them, but they have no science of alchemy. Many men and women find their inspiration in schools. But after the largest measure of allowance, it will be conceded that the amount of scholarship and efficiency in the world far exceeds the output of our scholastic plants. There are more of such people than schools produce, and the surplus must be accounted for in some other way. This surplus comes, somehow, from that vast throng who are, in a sense, the forgotten children of modern education—those hundreds of thousands who fall out of the ranks in school days, and yet who persist and find themselves without the help of the schools. It is very fortunate that this is so, for otherwise we might have to abandon some of our weightiest political maxims. The world is governed by proverbs, but as a rule of action, a proverb is as dangerous as dynamite. It is as useful as a club in a political campaign. But Dr. Holmes was right: proverbs should be sold in pairs so that one may correct the other as a counter irritant.

One of the most venerable and mossy of these narcotic saws is that our school systems are the bulwark of democracy. Undoubtedly presidents could be elected on this platform alone, if you could find an opposing party foolish enough to deny it. Yet schools can be the bulwark of democracy only by a confusion of terms, by which we mean that education and intelligence are the bulwarks of democracy. This we may grant; but we are now speaking of something besides the three R's and things that children learn in school. By education and intelligence, we mean the resultant of many forces acting on one point. We may readily admit that democracies like ours have only intelligence with which to oppose the powers that tend to gather at the center or to fly off the circumference.

It seems to me that what we call the education of our schools is a very imperfect instrument for the work it is supposed to do. What do we say first to that fifty per cent of the population who drop out of grammar schools with only the most elementary and inadequate knowledge of the three R's? What has the school given them with which to fight the battles of democracy? It is not only the spur of necessity which drives youth to labor so early. That is undoubtedly one cause. There are also the profound weariness and distaste which come of forever seeking from the textbook page, from the teacher's voice, and from the gradgrind drill for something to awaken the mind where the mind has no interest. Germany has been the first to see this failure of the common school to equip the majority; the killing effect of one sort of training for every type of mind. Witness the system of continuation schools for those who find themselves after beginning the bread and butter work of life. Witness the compulsion of the employer to devote part of the apprentice time to special instruction in the chosen craft. Even the unused moments of garrison life in the army are not wasted. Everywhere the progress of Germany is prolonging the school day in the discovery of aptitude, and in the cultivation of it after it has been discovered. In our English-speaking world we are trying to find the same thing in our trade schools, in our manual training, in our vocational education, in the many things which we perhaps hastily call fads in education. They all indicate a reaching after something which is not now attained; a search for an awakening influence on minds that are now dormant; for something to light the inward eye. In all there is the implication of a need which has not been met. These things are the evidence that the diet of public education is not varied enough to nourish all the children of the commonwealth, to awaken the dormant power for **SOME THING** that lies somewhere in most of humanity.

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

Public education has given long and careful thought to those who remain in school. It is just becoming conscious of the great majority who do not remain—the great majority whom necessity, choice, or lack of adaptation of the school to the child drive yearly into the rough school of life. At present the best that schools do for these is to provide each child with the means of self education—the ability to read. But we are to remember that this is only one of the instruments of education; it is not education itself. It is no discovery, and it needs little observation to point out, that with this instrument of reading, the newspaper, the magazine and the book are the potent educators of our day. They are, or should be, the bulwark of democracy. I am not concerned to discuss this further than to show that what we have vaguely depended solely upon our schools to do, is not done by them, and never has been done by them. For the great mass, our schools give each child the one open sesame—reading. There they leave him to open what doors he can and will.

Before I suffer as a heretic, let me quote a really thoughtful man, Thomas Carlyle, called by a breezy miss in our last civil service examination "the great English apostle of hope." You remember that, in speaking of the origin of universities, Carlyle in his *Heroes* said, "If we think of it, all that a university or final highest school can do for us is still but what the first school began doing—teach us to read. The place where we are to get knowledge is the books themselves. It depends on what we read after all manner of professors have done their best for us. The true university of these days is a collection of books." Possibly there is a little something "proverbial" about this, and perhaps it should be mixed with a trifle of Mark Hopkins on the end of a log. But a collection of books, be it large or small, is a library. That definition still holds, though we may have to include

"skittles and beer" after awhile. It is quite clear that this aspect of a library as a distinct and active factor in education has only of late impressed itself upon the public mind. It marks the library as a vitalized public utility, from which we are to expect more than has yet been received. Even the best of schools has its limitations because of the inflexibility of its courses of study, and it may fail, often does fail, to touch with any spark of living fire. But the library may provide something for every type of mind. The library cannot create mind or the will and disposition to use it, any more than the school can. But where the desire to feed any mental craving exists, it would be a very poor library indeed that cannot satisfy it in some degree. This power of the right book to supplement the school, or even to take the place of it, is not yet comprehended in any fulness in our public education. But it is just in this power of the book that a library has one of its best reasons for being, and it is for this reason that, when the library comes into its own, it will be a most important factor in education. Let us see to it that one door is kept open for those who discover themselves after school days are gone. There are thousands who fail to grasp their opportunities in the way and at the time that schools prescribe that they should. Some of these find themselves by living, by working, by accident it may be, or by any of the infinite ways in which humanity adjusts itself to its surroundings. For them the library is a path into fields of learning, into avenues of power that make all things possible. Here is the college of our self-educated man. There is no mystery about it. It is the natural result of following the inward light. We know that the better part of education is what we give ourselves.

One should not use a single instance to prove a principle. It is not merely bad logic; it is not logic. Yet the fact that everyone who deals either with people or with books knows many such cases shows that the experience is universal. One day

not long ago, as I sat alone in the office, a lad came in. "Mister, do you buy the books here?" I admitted complicity. "Will you buy one that I want?" I asked what it was. "Chickens." To cut the story short, I asked him to sit down and we talked about chickens, for I am something of a farmer. I found that he had read everything in the library on poultry and was hungry for more. He knew the hen intimately. He had mastered the genealogy, the sociology, the psychology, and the "Why" of hens. Furthermore, while he was doing time in school, he was also carrying on a successful chicken business on a city lot, from which business he had wrung two thousand hard dollars, which he had safely in the bank. He had already marked down a little farm near the city which would be his as soon as he had "completed his education" in the grammar school, and then he would make the feathers fly. I am glad to say he got his book, and I added another lesson to the many my boys have taught me.

What is our concern with this lad? He is a type of what I have in mind. I do not value him for his ability to make money. Men make money who aren't worth a cent. I measure him by his value as a producer, by his value to humanity as an example, and by his value to a library as a walking delegate for free and unrestricted choice in books. He is an educated man, joyfully occupied in something which engages every faculty of his mind, which he loves, understands, and has mastered for himself. Your country and mine will be the better the more they can grow of that sort of man. He has made good; he has arrived. And to arrive somewhere, under your own steam, is a great thing in life. You might not get the answer you were looking for, but you could not get a foolish answer, if you asked him of Chanticleer.

Lest I be misunderstood, I repeat for a moment. Schools must be systematized. They must follow a course of study. Unhappily, what is called economy dictates that the young must be herded together

in droves, graded by their ability to do one or two things into groups of presumptively equal power, equal ability to comprehend and to labor, and of similar tastes. It is the best that modern education has been able to do in the schools. Yet every one of these presumptions of equality is false. In spite of the Declaration of Independence, no two people on earth are equal except in their right to live, move and have their being. But on this educational bed of Procrustes each soul of our Anglo-Saxon race lays him down to pleasant dreams. Alas for him whose mental legs are too long, or too short, to fit the couch! Dreams? For some they are nightmares! Just because of this narrowness of public education, because of its inability to touch all types of mind, we have that endless procession, out and ever out, from our schools.

It is not my wish to take a hopeless view of education. There is no reason for taking such a view. I wish merely to emphasize a fact which has always been true, but a fact of which we are just becoming conscious. The problem of education in the days that are coming is to adjust our machinery so that these lost products shall be lessened. In this readjustment the library will have its place as a recognized and systematic factor in "the greatest business of the state."

The open door through the library and the book has a pleasant sound. Yet probably the most surprising fact in actual experience is the helplessness of even intelligent people in using books. The address of Prof. Chamberlain, delivered before this association a year ago, did not overstate the case of the schools. But schools are beginning to meet the issue, and in time they will remedy the conditions for those who are fortunate enough to remain in schools. But always for us will remain that contingent who drop out of school, in days before the school can reach them with this gospel of the book. The school has lost them, and, if ever they find the open door through the book, it will be by chance, or because the li-

brary itself opens the door. It rests with us to proclaim our mission to them. Of course every good library has always taught those insistent ones who knocked at its doors. But the library has been a passive agent of this education, not an active one. A public library, in my judgment, should be equipped with the necessary apparatus to conduct this work systematically, to propagate its own use, to spread the gospel of the open door among the people whom it serves. If this seems a violent innovation, I beg you to consider it from the schoolmaster's point of view, as well as from the librarian's. Here is a great body of people in every community whom other agencies have taught to read, who depend upon reading to return service to the state and to promote their own welfare. On the other side, the library, with the admitted duty of furthering education through the book. Does it not rest with the library to teach persistently, systematically, and by every practicable means, how and where to find what to read? The means of doing this is another matter, but for the expediency of it, and the need of it, examine in any considerable community, the roster of the great correspondence schools, and reflect how many people are groping their way out of darkness toward the light. What people pay for, as they do for this instruction, they want; and what these learners get for their money, they should have for nothing in any public library. When we teach how and where to find what to read, the open door through the library and the book will have some meaning for every man, woman and child who can simply read. All the artificial barriers that stand between the reader and his book will go; the barrier in the book itself will largely be removed, and the library will reach through intelligent choice many of those who are counted down and out by the schools: the thoughtful man who has come to realize the possibilities of his work: the one who has waited long to find his aptitude; the timid; the hesitant; the shy and distrustful; the misun-

derstood; those who see the "dawn of a tomorrow." The procession is endless, and each has his human need, which runs the gamut from utility to the highest joys of life. We talk so much about the struggle for existence that we forget that the best thing in life is just to live. Not all reading is for material profit; some of it is for happiness, and that happiness is purest and most complete which we find for ourselves. It is the discovery of one's own light that brings the abiding joy. What man or woman cannot look back to the inspiration of some finding of his own for which he owes no one but his Creator? These are the finest moments of life.

"Then felt I like some watcher of the
skies,

"When a new planet swims into his ken."

So said Keats upon first looking into Chapman's Homer. To express the rapture of the poet is given only to the poet. But the pure joy of finding for ourselves some of the true and beautiful with which we are in harmony, is reward enough. Whether we look upon our library as a source of recreation, of happiness or profit (and it is all of these) this army, who have fallen out of the ranks in the onward march of education in the school, seem to be our especial wards. To open the door through the book for them is a work worth doing, not as a means of salvation, but as a means of sowing more efficiency and more happiness among men. Ours is not the schoolmaster's task of teaching things: it is the nobler task of showing humanity how to teach itself.

And, while we speak of missions, the library need not take itself too seriously. The world is not looking to us for the salvation of mankind. When all is done that can be done, there will still be those who will not read, and who will follow the primrose path after their natures. There are many agencies in life that work for good and the library is one, not the only one. Our field is clear-cut and well-defined—to extend the use of books. There seems to be a sort of nervous notion abroad that one of the chief ends of li-

braries is to draw a crowd and put a nice book into every hand. I do not know about all these enrichments of our libraries as I read of them. Have books any compelling power over those who merely come into their presence, unless such people love the books or at least wish to read them? Of this I have no doubt: There are enough who care to use our libraries, if we can take away that helpless bewilderment which overcomes those who are cast adrift, without rudder or compass, upon a sea of books. Teach them the ways in which books may be made to yield their treasures. Open that door in youth if possible, and it will be the best possession which youth carries into manhood. But open it sometime, for the real harvest time is when he who wishes to read, reads what he wants. It might be more soul-satisfying to me to hand out to my chicken boy books that minister to more attenuated needs—but what about the boy? Is he not better that he finds for himself in the book what feeds his mind? The glory and power of the library is that he who can merely read, may there find what the in-dwelling spirit asks for. It is good that there should be one place in education where there is no brimstone and treacle, no Mr. Squeers, and no Smikes. "For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as the soul whose progeny they are."

The FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT: A curiosity which has existed since libraries were first started is about to be gratified. We are to get the answer to the question, "What do the people want?" from MISS JESSIE WELLES, of the Carnegie library of Pittsburgh.

WHAT DO THE PEOPLE WANT?*

If we are to believe the voices in the air the people want some big things, for it is a notable fact that the things most loudly demanded are wanted by a few people for all the people. The socialistic group wants a coöperative industrial sys-

tem for everybody, another familiar group in no uncertain voice demands votes for all, whether we want them or not, and there is a third group to which our president has referred, the members of which think that they see in universal education a panacea for the ills of state and society. Of this group all librarians must be at least ex-officio members while librarians in public libraries must work definitely toward the end which it avows.

How are we doing this? It will not serve to take refuge back of the statement that our only hope for universal education is with the child. We have a duty toward the adult as well as toward the child, and our aim must be not to get people to read books but to get all the people to read the right books, the books best adapted for their individual development.

Are we supplying the right books? For book selection, a well nigh perfect technique has been established, but is technique enough? Knowledge of books and of technique are imperative but the librarian who supplies the right books to all the people must know and understand his fellowmen.

Who are the people whom we are to serve? Do we perchance throw them into one great group and call them the public as distinguished from librarians? Who are we but "the public" to the actor, the artist, the man in the railway office? No, a wise providence has endowed men with a great variety of characters and temperaments, and when environment has further complicated matters, we must try to understand them all. For our present purpose let us group the people on the basis of a taste for knowledge.

Some people are born with a thirst for knowledge, some acquire a taste for it through early training and environment and some must have knowledge thrust upon them if they are to have it at all. Of book selection for the educated in any of these groups this paper does not deal. The subject has been discussed often and well, and while we have by no means reached the point where we no

*Abstract.